

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
EURE-00 NSC-05 /065 W
-----114485 231843Z /47

P R 231750Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1709
INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 15795

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, MILI, GW
SUBJECT: NATO AWACS - FINANCIAL EXPERTS MEETING AND
BACKGROUND

REFS: (A) BONN 06215; (B) BONN 06339;
(C) BONN 10873 (D) BONN 15684 (NOTAL);
(E) STATE 228888 (NOTAL);
(F) BONN 15708 (NOTAL)

1. WE WISH TO SORT OUT CONFUSION THAT MAY HAVE ARISEN
FROM AN APPARENT CONTRADICTION BETWEEN REFS D AND E
ABOUT GERMAN ATTENDANCE AT THE NATO EXPERTS MEETING
SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 29-30.

2. GENERAL ALTENBURG, WHO WAS A SOURCE IN BOTH CABLES,
SAID THAT THE TERM "APPROPRIATE LEVEL" FOR THE FRG
REPRESENTATION WOULD MEAN THE WORKING LEVEL. THE FRG
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WILL NOT BE REPRESENTED AT THE BOWMAN LEVEL. MR.
PADBERG, THE BUDGET CHIEF, WILL NOT GO ALTHOUGH HE WOULD
HAVE GONE IF IT HAD REALLY BEEN A "HIGH LEVEL FINANCIAL
MEETING."

3. THUS, THE "APPROPRIATE" GERMAN LEVEL WILL BE BELOW
THAT OF THE US. THIS IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE FRG BECAUSE

THE US WILL BE PLAYING A BRIEFING ROLE. GENERAL ALTENBURG UNDERSTANDS IT IS ALSO ACCEPTABLE TO GENERAL BOWMAN. THE GERMAN REPRESENTATIVES, ON THE OTHER HAND, WILL PRINCIPALLY BE ASKING QUESTIONS.

4. THE GERMANS ALSO BELIEVE, AS INDICATED IN REFS D AND E, THAT THE MEETING SHOULD BE HELD AND THAT THE EXPERT STAFFS SHOULD BE BOOSTED AS NECESSARY TO PREPARE THE GROUNDWORK FOR A LATER HIGH LEVEL MEETING.

5. THE QUESTIONS THAT THE GERMANS WILL ASK FALL INTO CATEGORIES THAT WE HAVE REPORTED BEFORE (REFS A TO C). THEY PRINCIPALLY CONCERN THE OPERATING COSTS OF THE AWACS SYSTEM, NOT ONLY THE FLY-AWAY COSTS, AND THE COSTS OF OPERATING A GROUND SYSTEM THAT CAN FULLY AND EFFICIENTLY UTILIZE THE VAST AMOUNT OF INFORMATION THAT AWACS WILL MAKE AVAILABLE.

6. WE ARE A LITTLE RELUCTANT TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF SEPARATE "WUST" AND "SCHNELL" FACTIONS AND OPINIONS ON AWACS. THERE HAS LONG BEEN WITHIN THE GERMAN MOD, AS ALSO REPORTED REFS A THROUGH C, SOME DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE CIVILIANS. THE MILITARY ARE OPPOSED TO AWACS, NOT BECAUSE THEY DO NOT APPRECIATE ITS STRATEGIC POTENTIAL BUT BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT BUDGETED FOR IT.

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ANY MONEY THEY SPEND ON AWACS WILL HAVE TO COME OUT OF THEIR OTHER PURCHASING PROGRAMS.

7. THE CIVILIANS, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE BEEN MORE INTERESTED. IN FACT, IF SUCH CIVILIAN OFFICIALS AS MINISTER LEBER AND FORMER STATE SECRETARY MANN HAD NOT BEEN PREPARED TO SUPPORT THE SYSTEM, THE FRG WOULD PROBABLY NEVER HAVE EVEN CONTEMPLATED PURCHASING IT.

8. IT SHOULD BE STRESSED AND CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT BOTH THE MILITARY AND THE PROCUREMENT SIDE OF THE MOD ARE VERY CONCERNED THAT THEY HAVE NOT YET BEEN PROVIDED WITH THE MATERIAL ON OPERATING COSTS THAT THEY HAVE FREQUENTLY REQUESTED. LEBER, WUST, SCHNELL, BRANDT, AND MANY OTHERS HAVE SPOKEN OF THIS PROBLEM. OUR MOST RECENT CABLE (REF D) REPORTING THE GERMAN INTERESTS IN COST DATA WAS BASED ON CONVERSATIONS WITH GENERAL ALTENBURG AND WITH TRIENES OF THE ARMAMENTS STAFF. IN FACT, TRIENES REMARKED THAT THE LACK OF COST DATA IS NOW PUSHING THE GERMANS TO THE POINT WHERE THEY MAY NOT EVEN BE ABLE TO INCLUDE AWACS IN THE NEXT LONG-RANGE BUDGET PROJECTION JUST AS

IT HAS NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE CURRENT ONE.

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9. LEBER'S MOST RECENT REMARKS ON THIS WERE MADE TO THE
AMBASSADOR ONLY TWO DAYS AGO (REF F).

10. ALTHOUGH THE WUST AND SCHNELL "FACTIONS" AGREE ON
THE COST ISSUE, THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME DIFFERENCE ON
THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT THAT THEY ARE AT THIS POINT
INTERESTED IN PROCURING. PARADOXICALLY, IT SEEMS TO BE
THE MILITARY WHO WANT MORE, SINCE WUST TOLD MCGIFFERT
THAT THE FRG FAVORED A NATO BUY OF EIGHTEEN WHEREAS
SCHNELL WAS LEANING MORE TOWARD TWELVE.
THE PRINCIPAL MOTIVATION BEHIND THESE POSITIONS
APPEARS TO BE NEITHER MILITARY NOR FINANCIAL, BUT AN
ESTIMATE OF HOW THE BUNDESTAG MIGHT REACT. WUST BELIEVES
THAT THE BUNDESTAG WILL REJECT ANY NUMBER BELOW EIGHTEEN
BECAUSE IT WILL SUSPECT THAT THE NUMBER WAS PICKED FOR
FINANCIAL REASONS AND NOT FOR THE MILITARY CRITERIA
THAT HAD ORIGINALLY DICTATED EIGHTEEN. SCHNELL
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APPARENTLY THINKS THAT TWELVE CAN GET THROUGH THE BUNDESTAG MORE EASILY. ALTENBURG TELLS US THAT THE MILITARY MAY ALSO BE WORRIED ABOUT LACK OF COVERAGE ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM THE SMALLER BUY.

11. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT BOTH WUST AND SCHNELL AGREE THAT ANY NUMBER TO BE PURCHASED MUST BE BASED ON A DECISION OF THE MILITARY STAFF OR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE. THE NUMBER MUST BE BASED ON COMMAND NEEDS AND ON MILITARY JUDGMENT, NOT ON BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS.

12. THIS HAS BEEN STRESSED TO US MOST RECENTLY BY DR. EBERHARD, WHO IS SCHNELL'S RESEARCH CHIEF. EBERHARD REITERATED EARLIER GERMAN EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET THAT, IN THE AWACS CASE, THE SYSTEM WAS AVAILABLE BEFORE THE MILITARY REQUIREMENT HAD BEEN AGREED AT NATO. THIS HAS ALWAYS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE MOD TO JUSTIFY THE AIRCRAFT TO THE BUNDESTAG, AND EXPLAINS WHY THE MOD WANTS TO HAVE A NUMBER CLEARLY BASED ON PERCEIVED MILITARY NEEDS.
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